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TITLE	Using Informal Diagnostic Tests of Reading Skills (Cluster VI-3 in a series of Individualized Teacher Education Modules). Description of Teacher Inservice Education Materials.
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ABSTRACT

The described module is designed for inservice and preservice teachers interested in acquiring the skills necessary to diagnose reading difficulties through the use of informal diagnostic material. Information on this module includes a description of its contents and the activities and resources involved in using the product. Ordering information is provided, and a critique of the module is included. (JD)

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U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

SP014204

DESCRIPTION OF TEACHER IN-SERVICE EDUCATION MATERIALS

A. SUMMARY INFORMATION

Title: USING INFORMAL DIAGNOSTIC TESTS OF READING SKILLS
(Cluster VI-3 in a series of Individualized Teacher Education Modules)

Publication Date(s): May, 1970.

Intended Users: In-service and Pre-service teachers interested in acquiring the skills necessary to diagnose reading difficulties though the use of informal diagnostic material

Grade Level(s): Elementary grades, or secondary with reading deficiencies

Number: One teacher per module, limited only by the number of participants a resource person can observe and evaluate

Primary Focus: The intent of the material is to help teachers build skills in the administration of informal reading inventories.

School subject(s) and/or in-service topic(s) covered:

The material deals with the diagnosis of student reading difficulties in the word attack skills, oral reading errors, and word recognition, using an Informal Phonics Survey. the Schonell Word Reading Test, and a Harper-Row Informal Reading Inventory. The teacher is also encouraged to make a plan for teaching a particular skill to one child.

What participant does in using the materials:

The teacher reads the instructions for administering the various inventories and/or recording results, administers the inventories to children and records the results, and plans (in writing) a "teaching strategy for one child." A "resource person" observes the teachers's administration of the inventories and checks over the recording of results as well as the teaching plan, using checklists provided.

Resources:

A 75-page photo offset booklet (with a 75-page appendix containing copies of the various instruments and checklists)plus a booklet of consumables comprises the module. An audiotape of children doing oral reading must be purchased separately, A "resource person" must be available to observe teacher performance, evaluate the work, and (presumably) provide feedback and coaching.

Describer critique:

The booklet is mainly a collected selection of a few reading inventories and instructions for use. Since the feedback on the performance of the teacher provided by the module is minimal, the role of the "resource person" in the implementation of this module can be critical.

B. IN-DEPTH INFORMATION

Title: USING INFORMAL DIAGNOSTIC TESTS OF READING SKILLS (VI-3 in a series of Individualized Teacher Education Modules)

Publication Date(s): May, 1970

Intended Users: In-service and Pre-service teachers interested in acquiring the skills necessary to diagnose reading difficulties through the use of informal diagnostic material

Grade Level(s): Material "geared" toward the elementary grades, but may also be used for secondary students who have reading deficiencies.

Number: One teacher per module, limited only by the number of teachers a resource person can observe and evaluate.

Primary Focus: The intent of this material is to help teachers build skills in the administration of informal reading inventories.

1.0 PURPOSES:

A rationale is given by the developers at the beginning of the module booklet (p.4):

"Skill in diagnosing reading deficiencies will help the teacher who is seeking to adjust his instruction to the needs of his pupils.

"The classroom teacher, of course, cannot be expected to complete a detailed analysis of every reading problem; this would require a more sophisticated clinical testing situation.

"However, informal diagnoses can be applied in the classroom at periodic intervals so that basic reading deficiencies can be remedied before they become more severe."

Referring to the entire series, the authors state: "A major objective of the 1969 Florida EPDA B-2 Program was to develop individualized teacher training materials...designed to be used in either preservice or inservice teacher education...prepared in the form of self-contained 'packaged' modules aimed at specific teaching skills or concepts...(and) expected to include all of the information and directions needed..."

In an introduction to the module booklet, it says: "The purpose of this module is to help teacher acquire a more thorough knowledge of the skills required for reading, and to develop additional skills in diagnosing reading difficulties through the use of informal diagnostic materials... using a word list and a series of graded selections from a reading series..."

General Objective: "The teacher will be able to identify necessary reading skills, administer an informal diagnostic reading test, and record, interpret and apply results. (Students may be from the grade level of his choice.)"

Seven specific objectives are indicated: one is repeated here to give an indication of the level of specificity the developer has used: "Given 6 groups of skills, teacher can identify proper category for each (phonetic, vocabulary, syntax, and structural analysis) with fewer than two errors."

For a complete listing, see the Florida Competency Based Materials Catalog, available from the distributor.

2.0 CONTENT — Scope and Sequencing of Topics:

Seven specific objectives are listed at the beginning of the module booklet and then each is stated individually at the beginning of the section to which it applies. For example the objective quoted in the preceding chapter (1.0 Purposes) is the beginning statement for the section "Hierarchy of English Language Skills," by Marie Hackett. The author lists phonetic, vocabulary, syntax, and structural analysis skills at four levels: (1) Identification level, (2) Classification level, (3) Rule Using level, and (4) Problem Solving level (following Robert Gagne's learning model).

Each section contains a copy of the instrument to be used and directions for use; three sections contain observation checklists for evaluation. Section #5 contains typescripts of the audiotape readings mentioned and a "master copy" of one in which the reading errors have been coded.

No bibliography is provided and only one supplementary material is mentioned: Marjorie S. Johnson and Roy A. Kress, Informal Reading Inventories. Newark, Deleware: International Reading Association, 1965. The audiotapes with samples of oral reading mentioned for #5 were not supplied with the module, nor were optional videotapes of teachers administering the various instruments to children sections 2, 4, 6).

In a set of instructions to participants, the authors say that "Prerequisite to this learning module is the successful completion of the learning module "Evaluating Learning and Instruction (VI-1)." In addition, the "input" for section #7 is to be, "Knowledge gained from learning module 'Evaluating Learning and Instruction' and 'Using Performance Objectives.'" Presumably, the sections corresponding to each specific objective are to be taken up in order, since the instructions to participants goes on to say that "After reading the objectives, (pages 2 and 3), proceed with pre-assessment for this module. If you have more than two 'no' answers, begin your study with objective 2."

3.0 ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES INVOLVED IN USE OF PRODUCT

3.1 Description of main in-service activities:

Teachers read written presentations for each section and then take a short quiz, give a test to one or more children, record test results, and/or determine grade level of child(ren) on tests given. A resource person checks the teacher's work at the end of each section and rates their performance according to suggested criterion levels.

3.2 Help given in use of product:

A 75-page Teacher Education Module (with an equal number of pages of appendix containing copies of instruments) is provided, together with a set of Consumable Pages, containing evaluation checklists and both student and teacher copies of the reading inventory instruments. Also needed (for Objective #5) is an audiotape identified only as Administering An Informal Reading Test and which must be ordered separately (see 5.3).

The module booklet outlines the course, objective-by-objective, and lists the step-by-step procedures to follow. For each inventory, there is an introduction and detailed instructions for administration, plus an observation checklist to be used by a resource person in evaluating the teacher's performance.

4.0 EVALUATION OF TEACHER INSERVICE LEARNING

At least a brief evaluation provision is made for each of the seven objectives:

1. "Self-study" recall quiz.
2. Procedure is evaluated by resource person using checklist ("establishes rapport.. reads pleasantly.."), 100% criterion.
3. Resource person examines and approves work.
4. Procedure is evaluated by resource person using checklist.
5. Work is compared with master copy.
6. Resource person evaluates performance with twelve-point checklist.
7. Evaluation is performed by resource person using checklist.

Resource person is the judge of whether participant has passed individual objectives (and entire module) or needs further practice.

5.0 ORDERING INFORMATION

5.1 Resources required/recommended:

An audiotape recorder is needed to play the oral reading tapes for Section #5, and the services of a resource person are required to evaluate teacher performance. The audiotape must be obtained separately. (See 5.3.)

5.2 Distributor name/address:

Panhandle Area Educational Cooperative
411 West Boulevard South
Chipley, Florida 32428
Phone: 904/ 638-4131

5.3 Components/approximate costs:

Component	Purchase	Rental	No. Req.	Reusable
Module	$1.30	No	1/teacher	Yes
Audiotape	$1.75	No	1/group	Yes
Consumable pages	.35/each	No	1/teacher	No
VTR tape	For Loan	No	1/group	Yes

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6.0 HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Identification of the developer:

The original draft of the material was produced by a Hillsborough County team made up of Joyce Wainwaight, Marie Mogan, Yvonne McKitrick, Jay Lutz, Barbara Tait, and Mary White. The present edition was prepared, after field testing, by a revision team: Dr. Marie Hackett (coordinator), Claire Duncan, Margaret Bell, and David Sprague all of Florida State University.

6.2 How developed and when:

Inside the title page it says, "This instructional module was produced for use in training projects funded through a grant from the United States Office of Education to the State of Florida Department of Education, under Part B, Subpart 2, of the Education Professions Development Act." The original version was completed in May, 1969; "The modules were extensively revised after field testing in 1969 projects." The present edition was completed in May, 1970.

During the field-testing period, this module was used on around 20-30 practicing teachers in several Florida counties. Three years went into the development of this material before it was published.

6.3 Evidence of effectiveness with users:

The classroom teachers involved in the field-testing were asked to complete "revisions sheets." These evaluation forms were then sent back to module developers.

The developers based most of their revisions on the critiques supplied by the classroom teachers, thus ensuring a more effective program for other teachers to use in their inservice education training.

C. DESCRIBER CRITIQUE

Appropriateness / adaptability / technical quality:

This product appears to be useful for its intended audience in the way any set of reading inventories with accompanying instructions would be useful. There is a decided lack of congruence, however, between the intent of the module and what it actually delivers. Without the resource person neither the in-service activities nor the evaluation provisions are sufficient to fulfill the objectives.

The reading inventories could be used in a wide variety of in-service and pre-service situations as long as participants have access to children to work with and a resource person to observe and provide feedback on their performance.

The print quality of the booklet (photo offset) is very poor and there are frequent editing lapses and typographical errors.

Content accuracy/social fairness/community acceptance issues:

Since the reading inventories provided are limited, questions might arise over their applicability to various populations of teachers and children, especially students of minority status and teachers whose views of reading differ from those inherent in the instruments contained in the module.

Overall summary/comment:

Although no information is available on product development, this module apparently borrows heavily from products produced by others, such as the reading inventories and the audiotapes. Since the "resource person" is given such a salient role in the use of this module, it would seem that such a person could provide teachers with inventories (and instruction booklets) that might be better suited to local needs and reading approaches.

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D. USER CRITIQUE

User(s):

Individual teacher, 4th grade, contained classroom, age and years of teaching experience not known. Works primarily with white middle class students. Educational point-of-view not known.

Used product "to train me to diagnose reading difficulties." *Note:* This teacher reviewed this material at the request of Project ARIE. She did not join with others in a group to discuss the material. It is not known if her critique would have differed if her experience had been different.

Summary of critique:

OBJECTIVE: Reviewer indicated that objectives were stated but #2 was "unclear and needed referencing,"and #7 "doesn't state evaluation." She states that "when I first read and reread them (the objectives) I felt they were confusing and (I) was apprehensive about the whole module." The reviewer indicates the objectives match what she wanted get out of using the product.

CONTENT: In terms of the *scope of the content*, she found it was sufficient to meet (1) the purposes of the product and (2) her purposes in using it. In addition, she found the product helped her to "diagnose specific reading deficiencies." In regard to the *sequence of the content*, the reviewer stated, "It was a training procedure step by step. For one objective (step) you needed to go back to results from previous tests." She noted "It was a very confusing training program to me because the page numbers were omitted and you had to keep turning back and forth." She found no evidence of sex, race or ethnic bias in the materials.

DELIVERY: The review's comments on the technical quality were...clarity: "very confusing," editing: "omissions," durability: "it fell apart (staples came out while I read it)," and the attractiveness and use of color: "not very appealing." In commenting on the help given in the use of the product, she states "It was a very frustrating experience to try and follow their directions." She felt you could not use the product as stated in the objectives without a resource person "because it is a training program – to be acquired by individuals and needs evaluation."

ASSESSMENT: "The written tests and questions were definitely geared to the objectives and provided an adequate evaluation of what you thought you learned from using the product."

OVERALL COMMENT: The reviewer indicated that there was not a match between her expectations prior to using the product "to train one to diagnose reading difficulties" and what she had actually learned. She stated, " I felt you could get an indication of grade level reading and some recognition of vowels, consonants, etc., but it didn't seem to really diagnose very many areas." She stated she would not recommend the product – "too confusing, not clear, takes too long." She did not feel the investment of her time was worth what she got out of using the product. The product was effective for her in that she liked "the Informal Reading Inventory and learning to mark errors was interesting and informative.